January 2009

FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT

PRACTICE INTRODUCTION

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service—Practice Code 666

FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT

Forest stand improvement is manipulating species composition, stand structure, and stocking of trees by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

This practice applies to forestland where competing vegetation hinders development and stocking of preferred tree and understory species. The preferred species are identified and retained to achieve the intended purpose of improving the stand. Spacing, density, and amounts of preferred plants are carefully planned. Consideration is given to the total ecosystem. Timing of treatment and retaining dead or dying trees will help minimize impacts on nesting birds and other wildlife. Food and cover for wildlife are further retained by minimal modifications of composition and spacing necessary to improve the vegetative cover considering the total natural resource base.

Purposes of this practice include the following:

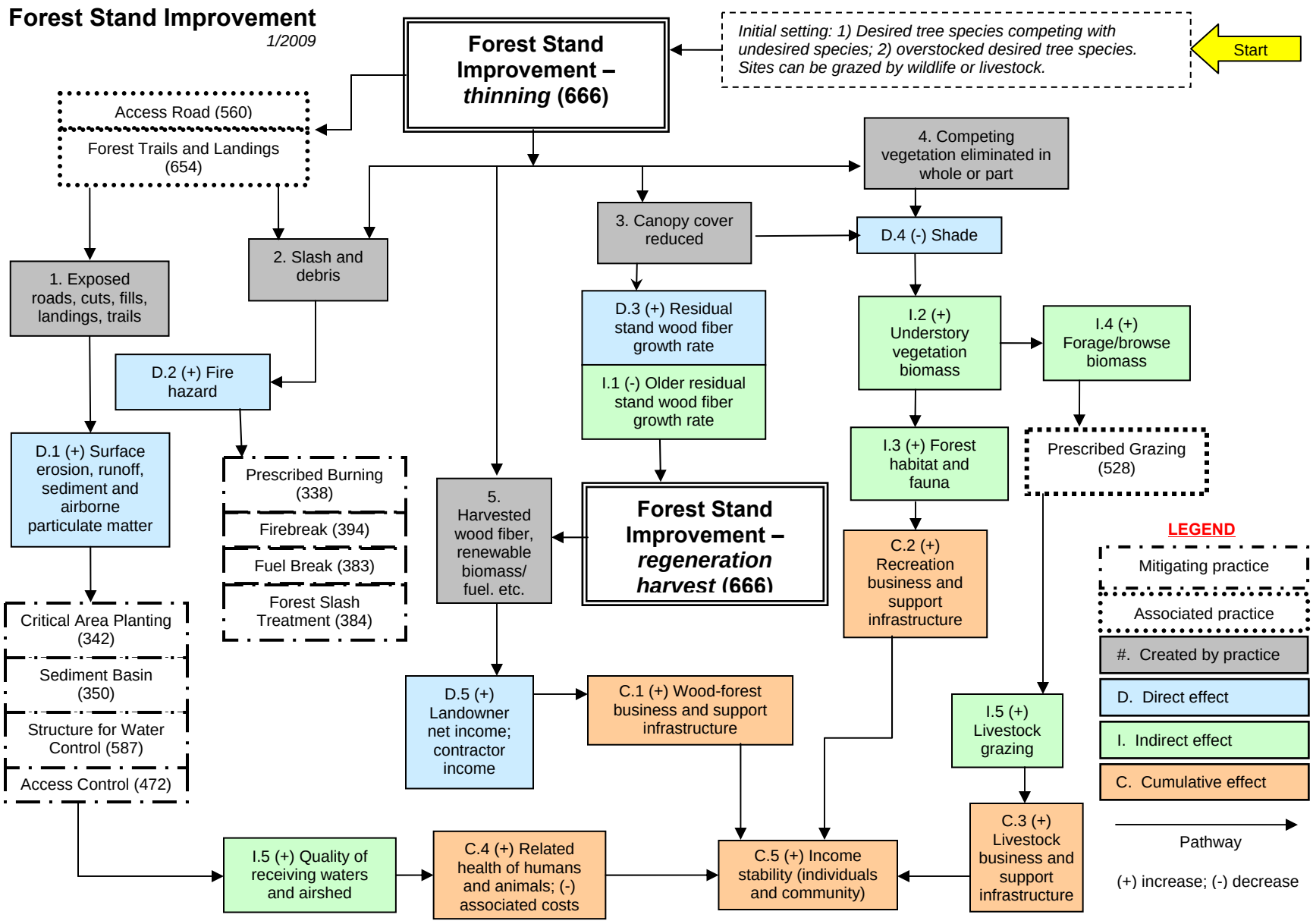
- Improve or sustain timber production
- Improve understory forage production, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, recreation, and hydrologic condition
- Harvest forest products
- Initiate forest stand regeneration.
- Achieve a combination of purposes

COMMON ASSOCIATED PRACTICES

Forest Stand Improvement is commonly applied as part of a Conservation Management System with practices such as Firebreak (394), Prescribed Burning (338), Tree/Shrub Pruning (660), Forest Trails and Landings (655), Critical Area Planting (342), and erosion control practices.

For more information, refer to the practice standard in the local Field Office Technical Guide and associated practice specifications and job sheets.

The following page identifies the effects expected to occur when this practice is applied. These effects are subjective and somewhat dependent on variables such as climate, terrain, soil, etc. All appropriate local, State, Tribal, and Federal permits and approvals are the responsibility of the landowner and are presumed to have been obtained. Users are cautioned that these effects are estimates that may or may not apply to a specific site.



Note: Effects are qualified with a plus (+) or minus (-). These symbols indicate only an increase (+) or a decrease (-) in the effect upon the resource, not whether the effect is beneficial or adverse.

The diagram above identifies the effects expected to occur when this practice is applied according to NRCS practice standards and specifications. These effects are subjective and somewhat dependent on variables such as climate, terrain, soil, etc. All appropriate local, State, Tribal, and Federal permits and approvals are the responsibility of the landowners and are presumed to have been obtained. All income changes are partially dependent upon market fluctuations which are independent of the conservation practices. Users are cautioned that these effects are estimates that may or may not apply to a specific site.